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AUTHOR Rice, Donald E.; Tkachuk, Hank
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ABSTRACT

This paper presents materials related to an introduction to communication studies course, a sophomore-level course at Concordia College, Minnesota. The paper begins with discussions of the course philosophy and implementation, noting that the course design is based on a trajectory through three major units of study--definitions and processes of communication, communication contexts, and communication inquiry and research. The paper next presents a detailed course syllabus and instructions for completing the three major written assignments for the course (an abstract paper, a synthesis paper, and a research proposal paper). The paper also presents a list of speech communication sources on which to base the writing assignments, three sample abstract papers, three sample synthesis papers, and two sample research proposal papers. Forms used to critique student papers are attached. (RS)

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ED 381 825

Foundations of Learning:

Teaching the Introduction to Communication Studies

Donald E. Rice
Hank Tkachuk
Speech Communication and Theatre Art
Concordia College, Moorhead, MN

The Course

SCTA 201: Introduction to Communication Studies is a sophomore-level course at Concordia College. Typically between 70-80 students are enrolled in a given semester. Sometimes the course is taught as a single large section, and sometimes it is taught in two smaller sections. The course fulfills Area B: Social Science in the liberal arts core and is also a requirement for Communication majors and minors. This packet contains a short statement of philosophy, a description of how the course works, and course syllabi and materials.

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Paper presented at the 1994 Convention of the Speech Communication Association in New Orleans on Nov. 19.

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Some thoughts on our course . . .

SCTA 201 introduces students to communication studies, teaches about life, fulfills a liberal arts core requirement for area B (social sciences), encourages students to think about the process of inquiry, serves as a prerequisite for many upper-level courses in the major, confuses students about definitions and their uses, prods students to do research, teaches them about form, attempts to make philosophers out of pragmatists, teaches how to learn, and sets a tone that the department desires to follow in other courses. Teachers do not volunteer in droves to teach such a course.

In fact, when I took the SCA short course several years ago on "Teaching the Communication Theory Course," I found that I was one of a very few who had actually volunteered for the assignment. Often this course (or a similar course) is relegated to the newest faculty, not so much because people think the course is unenjoyable, but more because it feels like "going back to school." Few people start with the breadth that seems necessary to treat all of the topics covered. However, it does seem that if we believe sophomores (sometimes freshmen) can "learn how to learn," certainly people with advanced degrees should feel comfortable entering into a broad dialogue about their chosen field. Still, the task seems daunting and the hesitation to sign on is understandable.

Once in the course, the instructor's mind is filled with questions of rationale: What am I trying to do here? What do I want them to learn? What do I leave out? What do I leave in? Why do I think sophomores need to know this? What is it it that they should be able to do after taking this course? This brief paper addresses partial answers to these questions based on experience with the course itself.

Experience reveals that we are trying to teach students about meaning exchanges (communication) and about the process of finding out about meaning exchanges (inquiry). We do not expect that they will have a thorough understanding of any one thing, nor do we expect them to master the intricacies of communication research. We do expect them to know a little about a lot, and to be able to apply what they have learned to other areas of study, especially, but not limited to, the study of communication. The course's position in the liberal arts core urges us to make explicit the connections of our field to both the social sciences and the humanities. This has manifested itself in a "light-touch" presentation of the history of ideas as it relates to communication inquiry.

Specifically, the course design is based on a trajectory through 3 major units: I: Communication--Definitions and Processes; II: Communication Contexts; and III: Communication Inquiry and Research. Unit I approaches the project of definition through abstract verbal definitions, through models, and through description of various communication functions. Unit II builds on this base and introduces the term *context*, which we use very broadly to refer to the various conceptual and physical spheres in which communication takes place. Loosely broken into *influence* contexts and *relational* contexts, this portion of the course surveys and compares public address, argumentation, persuasion, media, interpersonal communication, small group, organizational communication, and others. Finally, Unit III brings students into the process of question-asking

and answer-finding as carried out thorugh various types of research perspectives including quantitative and qualitative social science approaches, as well as a brief introduction to critical and historical work. Finally, if there is time after all that, we do try to highlight ideas already presented in the areas of both research and communication ethics, as well as addressing any other kinds of pitfalls the students may have encountered.

If the above approach still seems somewhat linear, we assure you that such linearity is more in the external design than in the actual teaching of the course. A multi-stage set of research paper assignments, built-in group "creation" work, and plain old teacher quirkiness keep the course fluid and sufficiently unsystematic to prove engaging for undergraduates. We are not trying to send them all to graduate school; we *are* trying to prepare them for other courses in the department and in the college. Our philosophy of teaching to the "top" does not seek to identify a "top" batch of students. Rather it is geared to bringing along all abilities of students by engendering the expectation that *all* will participate to the best of those abilities and thus enter the dialogue about human communication. We haven't yet had students tearing chapter 1 out of the book (ala Robin Williams in *Dead Poet's Society*), but we easily could.

The "dialogue" consists of the voices of our students, ourselves, the 201 teachers who have gone before, the theorists as presented in texts, handouts and mini-lectures, and anyone else who chooses to enter. In fact, we make it a practice to bring in other teachers from the department who are brave enough to pace in the lion's pit with 80 students and 80 new ideas a day. The more the merrier as students and teachers participate in the collaboration, co-inquiry, and sometimes shared suffering (or, at least, mass head scratching).

We have chosen to leave out whatever we choose. That is, from term to term, a given context or two may drop out to be replaced by another, or one research method may receive great emphasis while another is only briefly touched on. I believe these omissions and slights are not done irresponsibly (though sometimes partly motivated by the current interest of the teacher), but happen because the "heartbeat" of the course is not its specific content, but rather its method. The phrase "ways of knowing" is becoming hackneyed and tired, but I think that we do approach the course as an introduction to perspective-taking and the acquisition of knowledge via perspective shifts. The course itself becomes a way of knowing, whether or not they buy into specific theories. This is evidenced by upper-level students who clearly express a shared concept of the "201" experience. Whether they view that experience positively or negatively, they all know they have been there, and they all have been to at least some of the same places. So what is *left in* is a common philosophy that students be able to independently examine and evaluate communication phenomena and the processes of inquiry that surround them.

The foundations of learning are important to sophomores because they are in-between discovering their base abilities and detailing their special categories of learning. They are sufficiently "schooled" to keep up but not yet canalized to the point of tunnel vision. They have a developing discipline for learning but they are still open to new ideas. It is this openness that allows the course to serve as a building block for extended analysis and research in the upper-level, context-driven theory courses: small group, interpersonal, intercultural, organizational, mass media, rhetorical theory and criticism, persuasion, etc. And as more of our teachers enter

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the 201 dialogue, the more we can capitalize on the connections.

Professor Kingsfield's line (from *The Paper Chase*), "they come in with minds of mush and they leave thinking like lawyers" is not a precise parallel of our goals (certainly not of our pedagogical style), but does illuminate some of our values. Kingsfield wanted his students to develop a discipline for learning, and that is a key element of our approach as well. In addition to discipline, we want students to leave with developed communication "meters" that allow them to function in their own communication contexts and the contexts that will inevitably be imposed on them. Sensitivity to the process of inquiry allows them to explore other avenues of learning, building on the overall philosophy of flexibility in the liberal arts. We have started to construct a liberal art of learning about interaction and we ask our students each to add their own bricks and mortar to the foundation.
--DR

Some thoughts on how the course has been/is operationalized...

Methods of teaching, assignments, and grading philosophies have evolved together into this package. It seems to me that it would be difficult to accomplish the goals without also employing the methods. The most critical of the methods seem to be: joint ownership of the course by the whole department faculty, connection to the rest of the curriculum through the use of faculty "guest" presenters, and the development of students' critical capacities toward their own work and the work of others. The following is a brief attempt to elucidate the methods and their integral relationship.

Course ownership by the whole department means the contribution of many minds both to the content and the methods. Faculty have come to agree about the specifics of content that must always be included and what topics may "drop out" at the current instructors discretion. This includes the adoption of a standard reference for writing style (Bourhis, J. (1993). A Style Manual for Speech Communication Majors. Orlando: Harcourt Brace Custom Publishers.) and attempts to mirror writing/research assignments after the formats employed.

A more significant signal of joint ownership comes in the inclusion of several departmental faculty as presenters. An attempt is made to engage as many of the faculty as possible by having them present a topic in their specialty area; especially if they are conducting research in that field. The principal instructor serves as the linking pin, the students get a chance to hear different approaches, the "guests" have the opportunity to be the first introduction to their field.

The use of outside experts also contributes to a lowering of the intimidation factor many faculty have felt in considering becoming the principal instructor of the course. Since so many topics are covered, it is reassuring to know that one can call on colleagues to provide expertise where the principal instructor might feel inadequate. In fact, participating as a guest also works as an initial step towards becoming a principal instructor.

The selection and preparation of these principal instructors has also contributed to the course evolution and, in my opinion, its success. With the exception of my own initial adventure of six years with the course, all instructors have had an "assisted" introduction to the course. Either they co-taught the course with someone who had already been a principal instructor, or they sat through the course before assuming control. There are two of our colleagues sitting in this term. This metaphorical torch-passing has been beneficial not only in providing the kind of detail replication one might imagine, but more importantly has generated regular discussion of the course and its values which keeps the culture intact when the instructor changes and provides valuable feedback for the current instructor.

A central feature of the philosophy of the course is embodied in development of student research and writing skills. In addition to extensive instructions for assignments, we provide samples of previous student work and peer-critique of written assignments to enhance the

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opportunity for the students to hear and value each others "voices." In class workshop days require students bring nearly completed assignments to class to compare their work and to offer ideas and suggestions to each other. Whenever possible these groups are composed of students investigating similar phenomena which promotes interest and facilitates discussion. We like to believe it also sets up the value of cooperative learning and the act of criticism as essentially a helpful one.

These concepts did not spring full-grown from our thinking like Athena did from the head of Zeus. The form in 1972 was very different from what it has become. The evolution to this configuration is the result of at least five major re-structurings. Since I was the principal instructor through almost all of that time I see those changes most clearly reflecting the evolution to the thinking mentioned by Don in the first section of this paper.

Let me conclude by pointing out that this paper is truly an example of the "reconstructed logic" of the course and does not really reflect the daily tribulations well. Things go wrong, assignments don't always work, students become resistant, and instructors have bad days. Despite the difficulties, many students choose to become majors in our field as a result of or in spite of this course! What we notice as faculty is that those who do become majors approach their upper level courses in a much more sophisticated manner — and we like it!

--HT

SCTA 201 - Intro to Communication Studies
Fall - 1994
Hank Tkachuk (tkachuk@cobber.cord.edu)
Olin 322
Office Phone: 299-3725
Home Phone: 236-6596

Mtg	Date	Topic	Assignment
1	9/ 2	Course Intro	
2	9/ 5	Definitions of Communication	pp.5-13
3	9/ 7	Characteristics of Communication	pp. 14-30
4	9/ 9	Models of Communication	pp. 31-40
5	9/ 12	Models and Functions	pp 45-65
6	9/ 14	Functions and Theory Types	Ch. 3 & 117-135 (articles chosen)
7	9/ 16	Reading Research	B: pp. 14-38
	9/ 19	Symposium	Sessions as assigned
8	9/ 21	Abstract/Journal Critiques	B: Appendix D&E; handouts
9	9/ 23	Verbal Communication	pp. 219-226
10	9/ 26	Verbal Communication	pp. 227-240
11	9/ 28	Nonverbal Com	Ch. 8
12	10/ 30	Exam Review	
13	10/ 3	Exam 1	Covers mtgs 1-13
14	10/ 5	Types of Communication Contexts	
15	10/ 7	Article Abstract Workshop	Abstract due
16	10/ 10	Public Address	
17	10/ 12	Mass Media	pp. 391-423; 470-478
18	10/ 14	Persuasion	Ch. 6
19	10/ 17	Synthesis paper work day	no class meeting
20	10/ 19	Argumentation	
		Mid-semester Break	
21	10/ 24	Interpersonal	pp. 288-311
22	10/ 26	Small Group	Ch. 10
23	10/ 28	Review	
24	11/ 31	Synthesis paper workshop	Synthesis paper due
25	11/ 2	Exam 2	Covers mtgs 14-24
26	11/ 4	Nature of Inquiry	
27	11/ 7	Theory Building & Research	Ch. 2 (re-read)
28	11/ 9	Social Science Approaches	pp. 491-518
29	11/ 11	Social Science Methods	
30	11/ 14	Research designs	
31	11/ 16	Humanistic Approaches	
32	11/ 18	Organizational	Ch. 11
36	11/ 21	Work on research proposals	no class meeting
33	11/ 23	Intercultural	Ch. 13
		Thanksgiving Break	
34	11/ 28	Review	
35	12/ 30	Exam 3	Covers mtgs 28-35
37	12/ 2	Research Proposal presentations	Research proposals due
38	12/ 5	Inquiry Unit retrospective	
39	12/ 7	Ideology and Communication studies	
40	12/ 9	Future of Communication Research	Discuss Research Proposals
41	12/ 12	Review for final - early makeup	
	12/ 15	11:00am (Final exam as assigned)	

NOTE: Readings noted by page numbers (pp.) are from the Infante text. Those noted as "B:" are from the Bourhis style manual.

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND DESCRIPTION:

So now you're in the much-discussed 201 class. You may have heard many things about it or you may have no idea about what's coming. I'd like to help you understand the course because I think it helps a student to know what is coming and how the class will work. It is my goal to have you enjoy the material we study and to be stimulated by it. Neither of those objectives is served if you feel uncomfortable about what is expected or don't understand what we're trying to do. I hope you'll ask me all the questions that you need answered to keep you comfortable with the course.

This is a survey course. That means we move quickly through lots of topics and certainly never complete one. Almost all of the topics we cover are mini- introductions to topics that become the subject of whole courses in the communication department. This means that you need to keep up on reading and assignments. If you miss two days of reading or class, you will probably miss the entire coverage of the topic being covered!

Why do we do it like this? We feel it is important for you to get a feeling for the breadth of this field of study. Later you will take specific courses in some of these subjects and you'll need to know how that material fits in with the other areas. This course is the place that the topics are all together to demonstrate the links between them. This is also important to you as you choose topics for more specific study in later classes or even in graduate school (talk to me about that one sometime!)

You should have figured out by now that this is not a course in developing your skills as a communicator. Certainly the knowledge of how communication works will help you some but we won't provide specific skills development as a goal. We will develop your skills in reading and analyzing research about communication. You will be asked to learn what makes good (and bad) research and how to tell the difference. Those skills should be useful in almost any area you study after this course.

Well, I left the hard part for last; this course is THEORY-BASED. Some students make that sound like a stage of development one has to suffer through (like junior high)! I hope you will find it interesting and thought-provoking. Theory is a lot more than casual guesses about why things happen. Some people argue that theory is less useful than application and so we shouldn't waste time on it. I believe that knowledge of theory makes our applications better and easier so that the person with good theoretical knowledge WILL develop superior applications. Theory is not hard if you listen carefully and keep up. If you feel that understanding isn't happening for you, always ask a question in class, stop by my office, or call me there or at home. The best part of my job is helping people understand.

COURSE POLICIES:

OFFICE HOURS AND HOME CALLS: If you need to talk with me, please call me at home or my office. I like to talk with students. If you don't get me, leave a message on my answering machine (with your phone # and a time you'll be home) or call the SCTA office (3143) and speak with the secretary. I will keep my office hours and I am normally in my office another 20 hours a week. I hate it when people say they can't get reach me so I make it almost impossible for that to happen. One note, I prefer that you don't call me at home before 8:00 am or after 11:00 pm or between 5:30 pm and 7:00 pm. I do eat and sleep and have some family life so those times need to be reserved for sanity preservation!

Office Hours: Mon & Fri: 9-10; Mon 1:15-2:00
Tues 9-12 Aft. by appt.
Wed 9-10 & 2:30-3:30
Thurs: random & by appointment (appointments anytime; please ask)

Home calls ok from 8am to 11pm but NOT from 5-7pm!

COURSE MATERIALS:

Textbooks: Building Communication Theory (2nd edition) by Infante and others.
A Style Manual for Speech Communication Majors , John Bourhis
All readings are from Infante et al except for those noted as "B:" which are from the Bourhis book.

Class handouts: Are testable and are your responsibility to photocopy from a classmate if you miss them.

CHEATING AND/OR PLAGIARISM:

If you do this you will fail the assignment and you may fail the course. Cheating means looking at someone else's test, using unauthorized materials while taking a test, or obtaining actual test questions/answers in advance of a test. If you are unsure: ask me! Plagiarism means representing someone else's work as your own. Examples would include copying from another class member, using materials previously submitted to this or another class, or using large segments from a published work without giving appropriate credit. Again, if you are unsure, ask me.

ATTENDANCE: If you miss class get notes from someone. You are responsible for all material presented in class. Concordia's general policy says students should attend class; I agree. Class meetings are designed to make your learning better and easier. The results should show in assignments and tests so I have no specific attendance penalties.

HOLIDAY DEPARTURES: Students who want to leave early for a break or during finals week must submit a request in writing for SCTA departmental review at least one month prior to the exam/assignment they desire to change. The request must include an explanation of the student's exceptional circumstances. A ride that leaves early or a plane ticket previously purchased is NOT an exceptional circumstance. A group of SCTA faculty will determine whether or not a variance will be allowed. The instructor of the course concerned will not be a member of the deciding group.

TESTS: Can be made up only if prior approval secured and before any tests are returned to the class (one class period following exam). Make-up PRIOR to exam dates is preferred for anticipated absences.

You are responsible for reading assigned materialBEFORE the day on which it appears on the daily schedule. I reserve the right to employ pop quizzes to help your motivation in this regard. Pop quiz points will be figured into the score for the next test if they are used. I expect you to have read material in a timely fashion because I often depend on your ability to discuss the readings in the context of the class. If you aren't ready to do that you have a negative impact on your learning and the quality of the planned activity for others. Don't get behind in the reading. It doesn't hurt to bring your book to class as a reference either.

GRADE WEIGHTS: Four (4) tests; top three scores are counted. If you miss a test, it will automatically become your low score and be dropped. There are three papers which vary from 2-5 pages in length and are valued accordingly and are listed below.

PAPERS: There are three short papers:

Paper 1: Abstract of a research journal article (1-2 pages)
Paper 2: Synthesis/review of several related journal articles (3-5 pages)
Paper 3: Original Research Proposal (4-5 pages)

Each of the papers will be described more completely in a handout and you will be given ample time to complete them. I hope that they can be a progressive assignment on a single topic. That is, each paper leads to the next one since they are all in the same topic area. If that is to happen, you need to help be thinking early about a topic area that you would be interested in and selecting articles from that area. We will work on this in class so don't worry too much about it now.

TEST GRADING: Test grades are determined on the basis of the top score achieved on the exam, not on the total points possible. Tests will be primarily composed of objective questions. Review sessions will be conducted in class.

66%	Top three of four test grades
16%	Research proposal paper
13%	Synthesis paper
5%	Article abstract

Final grades are computed based on total grades added together. Each grade level is a "floor" for the next highest grade. For example: a person whose average is 3.8 achieves an "A" because they are above the "floor grade" for an A. The person with a grade average of 2.4 would earn a "B-". This means virtually no one can be hurt by just missing the next highest individual grade.

Grade	Points	% of Top Score
A	(4.0)	97-100
A-	(3.7)	94-96
B+	(3.3)	91-93
B	(3.0)	88-90
B-	(2.7)	85-87
C+	(2.3)	82-84
C	(2.0)	76-81
C-	(1.7)	73-75
D+	(1.3)	70-72
D	(1.0)	67-69
D-	(0.7)	64-66
F+	(0.3)	61-63
F	(0.0)	0-60

Examples:

Test Grade

Your test score on test 1 is 72. The top score is 81. Your grades is B since 27 is 88.8% of 81. I will post a grade breakdown by letter grade for each test so even if you find the % determination a hassle, you can look up your ID # and find your letter grade if you agree to let me post your grades. You can always come to see me if you are not sure about your grades.

Final Grade

If you multiply the numerical equivalent of your grade by the percentage that an assignment is worth, you get a total we'll call grade points. If you add those together for all of your assignments, you will get your final grade. The following sample should help clarify:

Assignment	Grade	Numerical Equivalent	% Weight	Grade points	
Test 1	B+	3.3	.22	.726	
Test 2	B	3.0	.22	(.66)	drop, lowest test
Test 3	A-	3.7	.22	.814	
Final exam	B+	3.3	.22	.726	
Abstract	B+	3.3	.05	.165	
Synthesis	A	4.0	.16	.64	
Res. Proposal	B+	3.7	.13	.481	
			Total:	3.55	= A-

Use this section to keep a running record of your scores and grades. If you come to talk to me about grades I will expect you to have this with you and that it is current.

Assignment	Grade	Numerical Equivalent	% Weight	Grade points	
Test 1	_____	_____	.22	_____	
Test 2	_____	_____	.22	_____	
Test 3	_____	_____	.22	_____	
Final exam	_____	_____	.22	_____	Use only top 3
Abstract Paper	_____	_____	.05	_____	
Synthesis Paper	_____	_____	.16	_____	
Research Proposal	_____	_____	.13	_____	
				_____	total

SCTA 201 - Paper Assignment Information

There are three short papers for this course: an abstract of a single article; a synthesis paper involving several articles; and a research proposal.

The ideal would be to pick a topic of interest that could serve as the basis of all three papers. That may not be possible for everybody, so changes of topics may be allowed between papers, especially between the first two. But if you find a topic that you like an can stick with it, all the better.

ABSTRACT PAPER

Abstracting research articles is a method of analysis that allows you to pull out ("abstract") the major points and ideas of the chosen article. This is especially important because journal articles are very packed with information and need to be taken apart in order to be useful to you.

This paper is due on 10/7/94. It should be one single-spaced page or two double-spaced (appx. 500 words). Choose an article in a scholarly journal (see list on back page) on some aspect of communication that interests you. You may have to look at several articles before you find one that you think is suitable for the assignment. Keep good records on all of the articles you find related to your topic, because you may be able to use them in future papers.

Read the article carefully. Write an abstract of the article using the following format:

BIBLIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION--provide author's name, article title, journal title, volume, date, page#, etc. Use proper form. Consult The Bourhis guide.

PURPOSE OR RESEARCH QUESTION--What was the research designed to accomplish? What question was the author trying to answer? Describe this in your OWN words.

KEY TERMS--list and define terms that are central to understanding the article.

METHODOLOGY--summarize the procedures used to conduct the research. Your summary should be clear and concise, so that a reader may quickly tell how the research was conducted. Again, use your own words to describe this.

RESULTS--What did the researcher(s) learn as a result of the study? Read the results and conclusions sections carefully to do this. Put this in your own words as well.

DISCUSSION-- discuss and evaluate the quality of the research. Give suggestions as to how the researchers might have done things differently. Provide your own ideas and questions about the article.

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There are several indexes in the library that will help you. the most useful guides will be the Social Science Index, the Humanities Index, and the Matlon Guide to Communication Research. The library also has bibliographic works on specific topics that may help. When in doubt, ask a librarian to help you.

OR, you may simply want to pick one of the journals off of the list on page 3, go to the shelf and start browsing. Sometimes this is the best way to get started. Some of the listed journals may be at MSU; you may use them there as well. Journals usually cannot be checked out. so either take good notes or photocopy the articles.

There may be other journals not listed on the back page that will be useful to you. Please clear these with me in advance.

SPECIAL NOTE: There is a reference book in the library named COMMUNICATION ABSTRACTS. This guide list articles and provides its own summaries/abstracts of the articles. do not use these abstracts as a model for this assignment and NOT rely on their summaries of articles. GO TO THE ORIGINAL SOURCE! However, this guide may help you find an article.

Start thinking about this project NOW. Come see me if you have questions.

****

Synthesis Paper

General Purpose:

This paper is intended to help you learn how to coherently integrate the ideas and conclusions of several works. This is an extension of the process begun with the abstract paper. In research, this paper would be what usually composes the section of an article often called the review of literature. A review of literature is designed to demonstrate that the author of the paper has read the appropriate previous research and has used its findings to generate the ideas and hypotheses to be tested.

For this class, the synthesis paper is really a "practice and preparation" to be able to do a true review of the literature some day. This is the reason that we require a limited number of sources rather than asking you to be sure you have covered everything related to your topic.

Topic Selection:

This paper will be hard if you do not spend some time developing ideas about your topic. Researchers usually do their review of literature to demonstrate that the hypotheses they have chosen have not already been tested and that there are good reasons in what has been reported to justify doing the research. In your third paper, we will ask you to take the material from this paper and propose some hypotheses and methods for testing them. This means that you should have some idea about that now to make your synthesis fit what you will do later. You might even try to develop some "educated guesses" about potential research questions to guide you as you do the synthesis.

Note: Some people will change topics between paper #1 and #2. This is ok, but you may want to discuss this with me, especially if you are having problems finding articles. Now is the time to change if you need to, as it is not advisable to change topics later on.

Guidelines and Mechanics of the Assignment:

You are to choose 4 or 5 articles to synthesize, and you may include the article you abstracted in this total.

Hopefully, you kept track of other articles on your topic as you went through your selection process for the first paper. This will make things easier now. I advise that you find your articles before mid-sem break, as this paper is due not long after break is over (11/31/94).

Example: Communication anxiety. Let's say you did your first paper on an article that researched communication anxiety in male college freshmen taking a speech class for the first time. During your research process for paper #1, you also found references to several other articles on communciation anxiety. You decide to keep this topic for paper #2, so you locate the articles and carefully compare them to each other and to the article you abstracted. In fact, you are now so skilled at writing abstracts that you fill your notebook with abstracts of the other 4 articles (NOT TO HAND IN, BUT FOR YOUR OWN USE IN WRITING THE PAPER.) Two of the papers are about the differences between men and women in terms of communication anxiety levels; one of the articles is on business executives and the kind of anxiety they experience at work; and one of the papers focuses on the particular problems of student leaders who have to make presentations to college administrators.

Having read this group of articles, you should have a pretty good idea of what research on communication anxiety is like, and about the kinds of things that researchers have concluded so far. In this paper your job is to describe the research, identify common themes (see below), compare and contrast the studies, and synthesize (bring together) what you know about communication anxiety based on this reading. This paper should be in the 3-4 page range, so you will need to write crisply. Use proper documentation forms when citing sources and include a "Works Cited" page.

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Format:

Organizational structure for this paper will vary depending on the writer and the types of articles. Two common approaches are:

BLOCK format: Each article is summarized in a separate paragraph; common themes are drawn through in transitions and internal summaries at the end of each section. At the end of the paper, the writer using block format should include a section that brings together the similarities, differences, and conclusions highlighted in the earlier sections.

INTEGRATED format: The paper is organized based on recurrent themes in the articles and each paragraph discusses several articles at once. Example: paragraph one features the topic of how background of speaker influences communication anxiety. Smith and Jones believe previous speaking experience is the key factor; Duffy and Johnson believe that early speech development is the most influential factor when calculating later anxiety-levels; and Morton, et. al. believe that gender is the most significant variable. These three ideas would be analyzed and compared in the same paragraph or section of the paper.

Analytical Methods:

There are a number of alternatives you can use to get started on the task of pulling the ideas of the different articles together. The ones mentioned below are examples of those methods. Don't try to do all of them and don't be afraid to do something else if you have a good idea. These are just illustrations to get you thinking. The idea is to find a way to make the articles "fit together" and these methods simply illustrate some general ways that has been done.

A. Theme analysis

After you have read the articles, try to see if there is a general theme which runs through them. Often this theme relates to a set of behaviors that seem to occur with some regularity. You may discover that the results of the articles each explain a portion of a situation and make a much stronger argument for the existence of the relationship when added together. For example, a group of studies which each find situations in the home which lead to conflict may suggest to you that there is a kind of "conflict environment" which is the sum of all of the results when taken together. You would then be able to make an argument that the results should be tested simultaneously to see if they affect one another.

B. Variable Analysis

Sometimes different articles seem to be testing the same variable in different ways and compared against different things. For example, the variable of speaker credibility might be tested in television messages, as it varies by gender or age, or in terms of kinds of messages used. You might organize your synthesis to make a kind of list of what has been found about credibility and then propose (for paper three) some kind of research to advance that knowledge in new areas.

C. Context Analysis

As we are currently studying contexts, this one should be easy to see. Some functions of communication might be the subject of research in different settings. For example, one might find many articles about conflict and how it varies when it is done interpersonally between friends, family members, groups, organizations, or in courtrooms. The part which changes is the context in which conflict is taking place. The synthesis would bring those ideas together to determine what is known about the subject of conflict if the results are compared and contrasted. Paper three might go on to propose some new contexts to study or even propose to integrate the findings of previous research to see if results found in one context would apply to a different one or how things would change because of the context.

D. Sequence of Research Development

In this method, one would find articles which seem to take up where the previous article left off. This is often possible when there is a good bibliography in a recent article and one can find a series of connected articles. Here the synthesis traces the continuing refinement of the ideas to show how one grew out of the one previous to it. Typically, in paper three one would propose taking the research the next step and refining the ideas even farther.

Question Areas:

Following is a list of suggested questions that you could attempt to answer in the paper. I do not expect you to answer all of these questions in detail, but keeping them in mind may help you:

How were the research projects carried out?
What various methods were used?
What results did each reasearcher arrive at?
How are the studies similar? How are they different?
When taken together, what do the studies tell us about the topic?
How do the studies show us the current "state of knowledge" on the topic?
In your opinion, what was not done well? What is left to find out about your topic? What questions still exist?

SCTA 201 --- Research Proposal

A 3-5 page (double-spaced/2 page single-spaced) paper in which you propose a research investigation on some aspect of communication related to the topic examined in the synthesis paper. There is no actual performance of the research itself but this paper should be considered the "outline" of how the research actually wold be carried out.

1. Re-read your synthesis paper and look for gaps or holes in the research. Remember, you are not looking for trivial things to improve but new concepts or ideas. Many of you already did some of this at the end of the synthesis paper.

2. Create a research question for your project. Try to be original. For example, if you studied advertising only towards children, perhaps you could propose an examination of the methods used on children compared to those used on adults. (i.e. What methods of advertising used on adults also are effective with children?)

3. Turn your question into a hypothesis to be tested. Using the example from #2 above, "Children's response to TV commercials will mirror the attitudes of their parents."

4. Choose a method for the project and describe it. This will be more clear as we discuss methods in class. Look at the methods sections in the articles you have read for examples of how this is done. It is required that you use a social scientific method for this paper rather than a critical or historical methodology. This will be clearer after we discuss all of these methods in class. Social science research is the type that generally is experimental or observational, uses human subjects, and employs measurement instruments like surveys, rating scales, or content analysis. Be sure to mention why you think you have chosen an appropriate method to get at your hypothesis.

5. Make predictions about what you expect the study to reveal. Give some indication of why you think the results will be as you propose and be sure to comment on what problems you think you will encounter in employing the methods chosen. Use good logic and support for these arguments.

6. START AS SOON AS YOUR SYNTHESIS PAPER IS DONE!! If you have questions, come in to see me; but come with ideas.

V) Speech Communication Sources [by J. Vernon Jensen]

National SCA journals:
- •The Quarterly Journal of Speech
- *Communication Monographs (formerly Speech Monographs)
- *Communication Education (formerly The Speech Teacher)
- •Critical Studies in Mass Communication

Regional speech-communication journals:
- •Central States Speech Journal
- *Communication Quarterly (formerly Today's Speech)
- •Southern Speech Communication Journal (formerly Southern Speech Journal)
- •Western Journal of Speech Communication (formerly Western Speech)

Various state speech-communication journals:
- *Speech Association of Minnesota Journal
- •Indiana Speech Journal
- •Iowa Journal of Speech Communication
- •The Pennsylvania Speech Communication Annual

ICA journals:
- *Journal of Communication
- *Human Communication Research
- *Communication Yearbook

Other:
- •Association for Communication Administration Bulletin
- •Journal of the American Forensic Association
- National Forensic Journal (began in 1983)
- Speaker and Gavel
- Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric (began in 1983)
- Rhetoric Society Quarterly
- Philosophy and Rhetoric
- PreText: An Inter-Disciplinary Journal of Rhetoric
- *Communication
- •Pacific Islands Communication Journal (East-West Center, Honolulu)
- Free Speech Yearbook (SCA)
- *Communication Research
- *International and Intercultural Communication Annual
- Written Communication
- •ETC.,: A Review of General Semantics
- Religious Communication Today
- Homiletics
- *International Journal of Intercultural Relations (SIETAR)
- *Journal of Business Communication
- *Journal of Business Ethics
- *Journal of Broadcasting
- *Journalism Quarterly
- •Canadian Journal of Communication
- •Australian Journal of Communication
- The Forensic (PKD)

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* Most useful for 201 paper assignments
• May be useful

Others are useful for the study of comm., but not as appropriate for paper assignments in 201.

SCTA 201
February 9, 1994

Powell, R., & Harville, B. (1990). The effects of teacher immediacy and clarity on instructional outcomes: An intercultural assessment. Communication Education, 39, 369-378.

Purpose: The intent of this study is to determine what relationship exists in teacher verbal and non-verbal immediacy and clarity in general and across ethnic groups.

Key Terms:
Immediacy - behaviors which reduce physical and psychological distance between interactions.
Clarity - quality of being comprehensive.
Bipolar scale - measurement based on selecting an answer from a pair of opposite answers.

Method: The 311 subjects were chosen from students enrolled in 11 sections of a required communications course at California State University, Los Angeles. Ethnic composition of the group paralleled current national demographic trends, and included Whites, Asian-Americans, Latinos, and African-Americans. However, African-Americans were not calculated in the results because of the small sample size. Questionnaires were used to measure teacher verbal immediacy, non-verbal immediacy, and clarity. To measure student attitude toward teacher and behavioral intent to enroll in similar courses, bipolar scales were used. The students used as reference for evaluation the teacher they just had in their previous class.

Results: The study revealed that verbal and non-verbal behaviors which reduce distance between student and teacher were related to teacher effectiveness and cognitive learning. The students attitudes about the class were positive, but improved student learning could not be proven. The researchers suggested that immediacy influences arousal which influences attention and recall. Student perceptions of their cognitive learning was positively impacted by immediacy, but actual improvement of cognitive learning could not be proven.

Latino and Asian students reported a greater relationship between immediacy and clarity than whites did. However, in each ethnic group the degree to which the students judged teacher clarity was the greatest factor in evaluating the class and instructor. Asian students also placed greater importance upon non-verbal immediacy in their evaluations.

Discussion: The research on this subject could have been influenced by existing language barriers. Of the participating Latino and Asian students, 34% did not have English as their first language. Their perception of clarity may have been an influencing factor as a result.

SCTA Abstract
2/6/94

Deaner, S.L., & McConatha, J.T. (1993). The relationship of humor to depression and personality. Psychology Reports, 72, 755-763.

Purpose

The primary purpose of this study was to estimate the relationship between depression and humor; personality and depression; and humor and personality.

Key Concepts

Humor: Indicator of mental health with therapeutic properties.
Depression: A state of deep despondency marked by apathy, emotional negativity, and behavioral inhibition.
Personality: An individual's unique and relatively unchanging psychological characteristics and behavior patterns.

Methodology

A booklet of five surveys was given to 129 college students. The students were told that the surveys measured their humor and feelings. Every other questionnaire measured humor. Sense of humor, humor production and appreciation, and humor as a coping mechanism were measured by three humor questionnaires. A person's degree of depression was evaluated in one questionnaire. There was also a questionnaire which measured the person's personality.

Results

The study found no significant differences in scores between males and females so all the data was combined in the analysis. People who scored lower on the depression inventory scored higher on the humor questionnaires. A direct relationship was found between people who scored high on the extroversion scale and those who scored high on displaying amusement in various situations. Extroverted people seem to be more stable and use humor more to cope with stressful situations. Introverted people scored lower on the humor questionnaires and higher on the depression questionnaires. The study found that humor seems to effect depression but humor and depression are not significantly related.

Discussion

This study is important because its findings could help treat and prevent depression. People who were clinically depressed should have participated in the study. If the researchers would have studied more people who were actually depressed their findings may have been very different and more accurate. The researchers should have also used a experimental method to show more of a causal relationship between depression and humor. Further research should focus more on humor and how it can prevent depression.

Reznikoff, Marvin and Catherine E. Wanamaker, "Effects of Aggressive and Nonaggressive Rock Songs on Projective and Structured Tests", Journal of Psychology, vol 123, Nov 1989, pp. 561-570.

Purpose: The authors set out to test if aggressive rock music had any effects of aggressiveness or hostility on those who listen to it.

Key Terms:
Aggressive lyrics: defined as having "descriptions of any violent or harmful acts towards the self or others."
Aggressive music: defined as "songs with a hard, driving beat, yelling, tension, and dissonance.

Methodology: Ninety college students were divided randomly into three equal groups. They were asked to complete two tests while a particular song played in the background. Group 1 heard a song with nonaggressive lyrics and music, Group 2 heard aggressive music and nonaggressive lyrics, and Group 3 heard aggressive music and lyrics. The tests given were meant to measure hostility and aggressiveness. One test consisted of writing a short story which was examined for hostile or aggressive elements. A second test consisted of 75 true or false questions that also measured hostility.

Results: The researchers found that the music listened to by the various groups had no significant effect of hostility on the subjects. The mean hostility scores on both tests showed insignificant variance between groups. It was also found through questioning that only 33% of the subjects realized the main theme of the song they had heard. It was therefore concluded that many youths do not pay attention to the lyrics of rock songs and that neither the lyrics nor the music of the songs had any significant affect on hostility or aggression.

Discussion: The results of this study appear to contradict what would seem a natural conclusion about loud, aggressive music: that it would induce hostile or aggressive attitudes. I would agree with the researchers that those who listen to rock music often do not pay attention to the lyrics and may "tune out" the music altogether when asked to perform a certain task. However, I don't think enough effort was spent choosing the songs to use in the study. I think there are more aggressive songs that could have been chosen that may have altered the results. I also believe that individuals would be more influenced by songs they like and that they would tend to listen to songs that are reflective of their personalities. For example, those who like aggressive music may likely have aggressive personalities.

Style

Communication 201
Paper #2 - Synthesis paper
Mr. Tkachuk
November 1993.

The connection between teacher immediacy behaviors and student learning has in the last thirty years been investigated thoroughly within the area of communication. Learning, particularly that which takes place in the traditional classroom setting, is an interactional process - and there is little disagreement that interpersonal perceptions and communicative relationships between teachers and students are crucial to the teaching-learning process (Richmond, Gorham and McCroskey, 1987, p. 574).

One study within this field was investigating whether students perceptions of verbal teacher immediacy behaviors could be associated with learning (Gorham, 1988, p. 40). Verbal immediacy was defined as using personal examples, encouraging students to talk, addressing students by name, etc. College students were gathering the data by answering a questionnaire, and the research took place in classes of different sizes. The results showed that the total of both verbal and nonverbal immediacy scores were significantly correlated with both affective learning and perceptions of cognitive learning, but that the verbal immediacy appeared to drop sharply as a function of class size, while nonverbal immediacy seemed to be unaffected by class size.The results suggested that students' perceptions of teacher immediacy are influenced by verbal as well as nonverbal behaviors, and that these behaviors contribute considerably to learning.

Gorham and Christophel (1990, p. 46) concentrated their research more specifically upon one aspect of immediacy behaviors; teachers use of humor to increase immediacy and student learning, and what affect the teachers' gender has on the humor-learning outcome. Also here the data were collected by question sheets handed out to college students. The investigation indicated that the students appeared to be more strongly influenced by amount and type of humor used by male teachers than by female teachers, and that perceptions of humor in the classroom are related to the teacher's use of other immediacy behaviors; both verbal and nonverbal behaviors.

The intent of the study carried out by Richmond, Gorham and McCroskey (1987, p. 574) was to find out if student perceptions of teacher nonverbal behaviors were associated with cognitive learning. Cognitive learning was defined as comprehension and retention of knowledge. Participants were undergraduate college students that were asked to fill out a questionnaire about the theme listed above. The outcome of this study suggested the possibility that the association between cognitive learning is nonlinear, and the possibility of the fact that moderate immediacy is necessary for cognitive learning and low immediacy may prevent such learning. But high immediacy may not increase cognitive learning over that generated by moderate immediacy. This means that a teacher who increases immediacy with students is likely to generate more student learning, and therefore the immediacy behaviors are substantially associated with student cognitive learning.

The fourth of the studies was investigating whether there was an affect of teacher

immediacy and strategy type on college student resistance to on-task demands (Kearney, Plax, Smith and Sorensen, 1988, p. 54). Strategy type was divided into prosocial and antisocial behavior alteration messages (BAM). Four written teacher scenarios were created to assess students' reactions to a particular college teacher scenario, and the four reflected the variables of teacher immediacy (immediate / non immediate) and BAM (prosocial / antisocial). The result indicated that the student decisions to resist or comply are associated with teacher behaviors. The relative effectiveness of prosocial and antisocial strategy type may be contingent on teachers' nonverbal immediacy. The research also suggested that students resist immediate teachers less than non immediate teachers.

These investigations concentrated themselves upon teacher immediacy behaviors and students' perception of these. All of the four studies took place within the same context; the classroom, and within the same level of the education institution; the college school. The participants were all students, and the researchers employed only questionnaires to provide data for the analysis. Gorham (1988) created the questionnaire with help from the students by asking them to make a list of their favorite teachers' behavior, and these items made out the questionnaire. The other studies used question sheets created by the researchers themselves. Richmond et. al. (1987), Gorham (1988) and Gorham and Christophel (1990) focused their studies on the connection between teacher immediacy behaviors and student learning, whether it was cognitive, affective or behavioral learning. Kearney et. al. (1988) focused on another aspect of teacher immediacy; the potential affect it might have on students' effort to prepare and work with material presented in class. The result indicated that immediacy might not only have an affect on the learning-outcome, but also upon the energy student put in their homework.

Three of the investigations examined the affect immediacy has on cognitive learning. To measure cognitive learning has been a problem, as there is no solid, objective measurement of this. Richmond et. al. (1987) facing this problem in their research turned to a subjective measure; asking the students how much they felt they had learned in class. This method was adopted by Gorham (1988) and Gorham and Christophel (1990) in their studies. But is this good enough to determine the amount of cognitive learning? Are the students in a position of giving a reasonably accurate report of their cognitive learning? Richmond et. al. (1987) argues that college student are capable enough to predict their own learning. That may so be, but what about measurement of cognitive learning in lower grade school, it is doubtable that the pupils there can report their learning in the same way. This is a problem which has not been solved yet, so far we must continue to accept the existing measurement.

The prior aspect of the studies of Gorham (1988) and Gorham and Christophel (1990) was to examine verbal immediacy behaviors. The results on the other hand suggested strongly that nonverbal immediacy behaviors are as well as important as the verbal. So this indicates that nonverbal behaviors are very closely connected with verbal behaviors, and that to study one of them without counting the other one is a difficult task.

These four studies tells us that the connection between teacher immediacy behaviors and student learning is very strong, but one of the unanswered questions within this field is how the association between cognitive learning and immediacy is.

Earlier researches have not found an association between the two that is consistent. Richmond et. al. (1987) suggests that the reason may be that the association is nonlinear. But this is only speculations, and the theory must be investigated more thoroughly in the future.

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Sample

4

Synthesis Paper

SCTA 201
Mr. Tkachuk
November 3, 1993

From classical to heavy metal, researchers, doctors, and teachers have found that music has a definite influence on our lives. How people perceive and use music can affect their behavior, mood, outlook on a situation, and even their productivity. Though the five articles that will be discussed do not all deal with precisely the same subject, they are linked with a general theme of how music music can be perceived and its varying effects on people.

Stratton's (1992) findings suggest that music may help to relax a person in a mildly stressful situation. When made to wait alone or in small groups, with and without easy listening background music, groups with music were more likely to engage in conversation. Through questionnaires, the rate of relaxation was found to increase when groups were subjected to the music. Interestingly, when the groups were questioned on how long they believed they had been waiting (actually ten minutes) the individuals and groups without music gave a significantly higher estimate than those with music. Background music did seem to relieve the stress of waiting with a group of stranger and make time pass more quickly.

Ferness and Blood (1993) discuss how background may affect a person's anxiety, productivity, and satisfaction with communication. These three possible effects were dependent upon variables such as the music's speed and mode, certain arrangements of the eight tones in a major or minor scale of an octave. In pairs, or dyads, the subjects were put in a room with or without background music and presented with problems to solve requiring consensus. When questioned, those hearing music were much more satisfied with the experience than those without music, especially when played in a major mode rather than a minor mode. Music apparently did not reduce the subject's anxiety level. This result contrasts with Stratton's whole conclusion of her experiment. Productivity of the assigned tasks was also not affected by music in general, but those hearing it in a major, rather than minor, mode solved significantly more problems. To draw the results together, music enhanced satisfaction with interpersonal communication and increased the rate of productivity, especially when presented in the major mode.

The two following articles studied how music can be used in a classroom setting. McLaughlin and Helm (1993) studied how the use of contingent music affects the academic behavior of two academically disabled middle schools students. The playing of music was contingent, or dependent, on whether or not the students could solve an increased number of mathematical problems in a one minute period. There was a baseline period with music before the playing of contingent music was put into effect. Results showed that the use of contingent music on improved mathematics did increase performance in both students. When the baseline period without music was re-established, a significant

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subjects been tested.

Brackett (1991) tested the effects of classical music on a classroom of students during their free writing period. Previously, during this period there had been large quantities of blank pages and students staring blankly at the walls. After the first day of free writing with a musical background, the students were questioned on how the music made them feel. A significant number of students replied that the music was relaxing, calming, and helped them to think easier. Productivity increased as did the quality of the papers. The writings contained more detailed, elaborate descriptions and the average length was longer. Baroque classical music proved to be the most effective because its slow movements "mimic the heartbeat and therefore produce a relaxed or serene state" (Brackett, p. 83). It is also stated that music affects our limbic systems, or emotions, and if that could be tapped into, the remembrance of what was learned increases.

Wells and Hakanen (1991) did study the emotional aspect of music, but not as connected with retention of details. Their research concluded that "music serves as a powerful communication medium, speaking directly to the emotions" (p. 445). The only methodology used was a questionnaire that asked the subjects to rate a list of emotions on how they felt when listening to their favorite music and how they might use music to alter their mood. The ratings were analyzed according to gender. The vast majority of subjects reported associating music with love, happiness, excitement, and confidence. This overall response that music "feels good" coincides with the results of how the subjects use the music for emotional management. The two most frequent uses are to stimulate by lifting the listener's spirits or getting them "pumped up" and as a tranquilizer to calm or relax them. Results show that women tend to use music for mood management significantly more than men, but the genders are nearly equal in the fact that they both acknowledge a strong emotional trigger in music.

These five studies, though different in the primary reasons for the research and the methods used, all have extremely similar results. They all tested how listening to music may affect a person, either through their emotions, productivity, interpersonal communication, or learning abilities. There seems to be a sense of increased self-esteem and social assertiveness and a decreased communication apprehension when music is being played. Music proved to be a positive force in almost all aspects. The results of the experiment done by Ferriss and Blood (1993) did show that music had no effect on productivity or anxiety, but there were no conclusions that music had any negative effects on the areas the subjects were being tested in.

Because all the experiments have been done within the last two years, I believe they give a fairly current idea of the "state of knowledge" on the topic. The effects of music on the listener have been studied for many decades. In the research done for this paper, it was apparent that many today studies are focusing on how music can enhance learning and retention of material in the classroom. Many music journals focus on how

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being involved in a music program can increase children's self esteem, which can carry over to how they communicate with others throughout their life.

It is obvious from the conclusions of the five studies that music has influence on people's lives. Many of the methods used to study music's effects are simply questionnaires. It would be interesting to actually watch how people's actions, moods, and productivity change when music is being played. There are so many areas where it would be interesting to see if music had the same positive effects as these experiments claim, such as the healing process to name one. I believe the full potential of music on communication and lives has yet to be unlocked.

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7

Sample

Communication 201
Paper #2- Synthesis paper
Mr. Tkachuk
March 1994

Interpersonal communication is a major factor in determining a college student's academic success. This applies to communication in both the classroom and the student's personal life. There are many different elements which influence interpersonal communication and although not all the articles to be discussed researched the same elements, they all dealt with how interpersonal communication relates to a student's academic success in college.

Ericson and Gardner's (1992) study focused solely on communication apprehension as the determinant of GPA scores and dropout rates. They found that there was no relationship between communication apprehension and GPA scores. High communication apprehension did have an impact on dropouts in the first year, but not significantly after that. An interesting side to this study, however, was the hypothesis that the students' perception of the college's concern for students with communication apprehension might have had an influence on the results. The high CA students could have been more successful because of the friendlier, more caring environment of the particular college in which the research was done. This is further supported by the results of a similar study done by McCroskey et al. (1989) at West Virginia University. They found that CA had a notable impact on dropouts and that high CA students had significantly lower GPA scores in the first two years.

The second of the studies was also concerned with communication apprehension but added the variable of how taking a college skills course would affect a student's CA and their communication competence (Rubin, Graham, and Mignerey, 1990). This study used both trait measures and self-report measures to assess competence and CA levels and looked at communication skills classes taken in both high school and college. The results showed that although students may take skills courses in college, they do not necessarily help. Classes taken in high school have a more noticeable affect on communication competence. Many students reported higher communication skills than they actually had during the first two years and lower skills than they had during the last two years. This pointed to the assumption that since most skills courses are taken before the junior year, they tend to make the students more critical of their own communication abilities.

The purpose of the study done by Burleson and Samter (1992) was to determine if there are any gender differences in the relationship between academic success and communication competence. Students from two fraternities and two sororities were tested for loneliness, communication skills and peer

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acceptance in relation to their academic achievement. The study showed that GPA scores were affected by several different communication skills but only one indice of social acceptance. However, the fact that all the participants belonged to a fraternity or sorority might have some bearing on how accurate the level of social acceptance was in the study. Loneliness corresponded positively to GPA and both loneliness and social participation were related in the same way to academic achievement. Most importantly, however, Burleson and Samter (1992) proved that although men and women did not always respond in exactly the same way to all the different variables in the study, there was no significant distinction to indicate a gender difference.

The last of the studies focused on loneliness relating to roommate rapport and how it affects students' academic success and persistence (Hawken, Duran and Kelly, 1991). This study found that two of the areas in which students viewed themselves as being competent did correlate with their roommate rapport as did three of the areas in which they perceived their roommate's competence. Loneliness was related to three areas of self-perception and two of perception of the roommate. Roommate rapport was negatively related to loneliness and loneliness corresponded significantly to those who did not persist in college.

Although there have been many studies done on the relationship between interpersonal communication and academic performance in a college setting, there have been very few studies that have actually researched the same variables and the effects of those variables. For instance, both of the first two studies looked at communication comprehension but Rubin et. al. (1990) were also concerned with how college skills courses fit into the picture. This variable makes the studies difficult to compare because of the added factor in the second study.

The last two studies both seemed to think that loneliness has an impact on communication competence and therefore influences GPA scores also. However, they came up with conflicting data which could lead to a whole new area of study. Burleson and Samter (1992) found that loneliness resulted in better GPA scores but the study by Hawken et. al. (1991) showed loneliness relating positively to those who did not persist in college. This causes some questions to be raised about loneliness itself relating to academic success. Do lonely people get better grades because they study more or do students who study more to begin with just become more lonely? On the other hand, do lonely people end up dropping out of college instead of doing well? Since Hawken et. al.'s (1991) main focus was on the student's roommate rapport and Burleson and Samter's (1992) study concentrated on gender differences, it's hard to tell what kind of effects loneliness by itself has on communication.

The study by Burleson and Samter (1992) was interesting because instead of making even more hypotheses about what elements affect academic achievement, they succeeded in

eliminating a variable. We now know that someone's sex has nothing to do with academic success as it relates to interpersonal communication.

Clearly, there is still much to be investigated in this field of study. We know about so many different variables that affect the relationship between communication and academic achievement, yet we haven't been able to make the connections between all the different variables themselves. Once more research is done, the field can be narrowed down and conclusions can be made about exactly what kind of communication affects academic success in college. This won't happen overnight but I think that these studies provide an excellent start for a very important area of communication research.

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Sample

Note: You must have a "Works Cited" page. I left them off of the samples to save paper but they should follow APA style like the last paper.

SCTA 201
Research Proposal Paper
Hank Tkachuk

Research Proposal

Topic:
The following paper proposes a research on how socially anxious people react and respond to social anxiety within relationship development.

Review of Literature:
Dindia and Allen (1992) conducted a meta-analysis of sex differences in self-disclosure. They determined that there were sex differences in self-disclosure, referring to an overall group of individuals. As Rosenfeld and Bowen (1991) investigated marital disclosure, they found that the relationship between the level and pattern of self-disclosure by husbands and wives in marriage resulted in various levels of satisfaction within the marriage. In examining an even more specific characteristic of men and women's disclosure within a relationship, Snell et. al. (1989) found that there was a variation in how willingly and how often individuals discussed their emotional experiences with others, particularly parents and therapists in this case. Meleshko and Alden (1993) also found that self-disclosures of socially anxious and nonanxious subjects were compared within the framework of motivational concerns, which were central to the current theories of social anxiety. Although all of these four analyses dealt with the amount of self-disclosure between two or more individuals and the effects of such openness, further research of self-protective behaviors of socially anxious individuals has not thus far been derived. ↑ good intro to Rsrch q

Research Question:
What, if any, consequences of emotional and gender self-disclosure are there in self-protection behaviors of socially anxious individuals within various relationships (such as marriage) between males and females?

Hypothesis:
The adoption of self-protective strategies (may) elicit negative interpersonal reactions that maintain self-defeating interpersonal patterns in socially anxious individuals. Be more direct

Method:
An experimental research design involving the use of questionaires will be conducted on male/female married couples throughout sixteen towns or cities in Minnesota, each selected by using stratified random sampling. The use of this sampling method will ensure that male/female couples with different morals, different backgrounds, different locations, different ages, and different personalities will be represented. Economical and financial constraints will limit the research to deal with a representative sample of male/female married couples within one state.

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In each experiment in the sixteen towns and cities, there will be two male/female married couples selected from each town or city. The total number of participants in this experiment will be 64; 32 males and 32 females. A selection of these participants through the same method of stratified random sampling would produce a representable sample. Hence, for practical reasons, the use of convenient sampling will be conducted within this experiment, involving a door-to-door approach of two male/female married couples from each town or city. In the door-to-door approach, a wide variety of individuals would be represented, as well as achieving mixtures in demographics.

The selected married couples will be transported to a previously selected experiment site nearby. They will be informed of the procedures of the experiment before hand and also given the opportunity to not participate in the experiment if they so choose. However, they will be given enough background information to ensure their complete understanding of the procedures of the experiment. This is in order to prevent any surprises, and therefore, to eliminate any uncertainty on the part of the participant.

Each of individuals will then be escorted to separate empty rooms by the same research assistant, who is expected to remain neutrally positioned. They will each be asked to view the same short video tape of three interactions between a married couple; the first consisting of a high rate of self-protection behaviors, the second consisting of a mild rate of self-protection behaviors, and the third consisting of a low rate of self-protection behaviors.

The first interaction (#1) revealed a husband disclosing at a high level of intimacy to his wife. The wife, then acting as an anxious individual, disclosed at low level of intimacy regardless of her partner's behavior. The second interaction (#2) revealed a wife disclosing at a high level of intimacy to her husband. The husband, acting as the anxious individual, disclosed at a moderate level of intimacy regardless of his partner's behavior. The third interaction (#3) revealed a husband disclosing at moderate level of intimacy to his wife. Portrayed as an anxious individual, the wife disclosed a low level of intimacy, however, at times varied in her levels of intimacy depending on her husband's reactions.

After the video is finished, each of the individuals will be asked to remain in the room alone and fill out a questionaire which reflects on the video, as well as some of their own personal experiences with interactions in marriage. The questionaire will consist of 15 questions which the participant will be asked to react to and rate on a semantic differential scale. The bipolar terms used in the rating scale will accurately measure the participant's perceptions of how comfortable, trustworthy, sensitive, interested, positive or negative, authoritative, protective, and anxious they found the individuals on the video tape. There will be three sections to the questionaire; five questions for each part concerning the interactions on the tape. Each of these five questions will assimilate to the following interpretations: a.) questions concerning the analysis of the interactions, b.) how the individuals viewing the tape would have reacted if presented in the same situation as on the tape, and c.) how the individuals react with their own

spouse in their marriage.

Finally, the researchers of the experiment would compute and tabulate the results of the questionnaires of each of the 64 individuals. A construction of a radomized block design or graph analysis displaying the results would prove useful in probing consequences and making inferences to emotional and gender self-disclosure in various relationships, such as marriage between males and females.

Predictions:
It would be apparent through the following predicted results of the experiment that anxious subjects would be concerned with self-protection during an interaction and would disclose at a moderate level of intimacy regardless of their partner's behavior. In addition, anxious subjects would not reciprocate their partner's disclosures as well as would nonanxious subjects. So, the self-protective behaviors of the anxious subjects would be associated with less liking and more discomfort on the part of their partners. This suggests that the adoption of self-protective strategies may elicit negative interpersonal reactions that maintain self-defeating interpersonal patterns in socially anxious people.

The comparisons would prove since socially anxious people expect disapproval from others, they engage in self-protection actions. Others, therefore, respond with discomfort and dislike. This confirms the anxious person's expectations of disapproval and intensifies his or her need for protection. The present data in research assessed by Meleshko and Alden (1993), only suggests the presence of such a circular pattern, hence, supporting the reason I proposed to further research the interpersonal consequences of self-protection.

If this research were indeed to be followed through on, many glitches would be avoided because of the critical evaluation of prior research. However, taking into account that not all experiments are perfect, a few problematic imperfections could be possible. One difficulty possibly encountered in employing the methods I have chosen, is that couples who would be willing to participate in the experiment would probably also possess high self-disclosure. Individuals with a high level of self-disclosure would be eager to participate, whereas individuals with a low level of self-disclosure may not be as willing to participate in the experiment. Therefore, producing slightly biased results due to the probability of participants being high in self-disclosure. However, getting around this small glitch is difficult because an individual cannot be forced into participating in an experiment. Yet, all volunteers with high self-disclosure might affect the random sampling and prevent the researchers from achieving the best samples possible. The best method of conducting this experiment would be direct observation of interactions between married couples, but then again this type of experiment may not be ethically eligible.

SCTA 201
12/8/93

Research Proposal

Topic: This research proposal suggests an experiment on how different contexts affect the persuasibility of an ad.

Review of Literature: DeBono and Telesca (1990) found that high self-monitors used more systematic processing for attractive sources in an ad and formed more positive attitudes toward the advertised product when the arguments were strong. With unattractive sources, their attitudes did not differ with argument strength. Low-self monitors, however, used more peripheral processing and formed more favorable attitudes toward the product for attractive sources versus unattractive sources, regardless of the arguments used. Gotlieb and Sarel (1991) reported that a highly-credible source had a more positive impact on the receiver in systematically processing the presented information than a low-credibility source. Similarly, Homer and Kahle (1990) found that receivers elaborated more on the message content when the source was viewed as an expert versus a non-expert. Pfau (1992) found that inoculation (being introduced to the ad's subject prior to viewing the ad) was more effective with high-involving products or services versus low-involving ones in "immunizing" a receiver against attitude change when viewing a competitor's ad in which comparative claims were made. Although these findings are useful for the advertising industry in constructing persuasive ads, no one addressed the issue of different contexts or mediums for the ad. (The previous studies were all done with print media.)

Research Question: What, if any, differences are there in the persuasibility of an advertisement run on television versus on radio or in print media?

Hypothesis: An ad run on television will be more successful in persuading a consumer than a similar ad on radio or in print.

Method: An experimental research design using questionnaires will be employed. The sample will consist of 60 students each from 10 different colleges in Minnesota and North Dakota. (The location will be limited due to time and cost considerations.)

Using stratified random sampling, students will be selected from a total enrollment roster obtained from the college registrar. The use of stratified random sampling will aim at getting as representative a sample as possible from the population. This should be accomplished by randomly picking students from different majors/minors and different levels in school.

The research participants would be told that they would participate in an experiment on advertising. All 60 students at each college will view/read three similar ads once in three different contexts created by the researchers--magazine, radio, and television, in no particular order. (The group reading the magazine will be instructed to read the ad once and shut the magazine. There will be two research assistants blind to the experiment observing from another room to ensure this is done.)

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The source in all three contexts will have the same level of attractiveness. The source will be female and will be wearing black pants and a white blouse with no flashy jewelry or much make-up. The magazine ad will contain a black and white picture of her, the television ad will be in black and white and will have her voice, and only her voice will be revealed on the radio. Her name will be Kelly Winkerson, a name which could be considered neutral as either male or female.

The ad in each context will persuasively compare two made-up brands of cereal (a total of six different made-up brands). This is done to avoid boredom from hearing the *exact* same messages and "tuning out" and to prevent learning from one context to the other. The ads are *created* by the researchers rather than known ads shown to account for any previous inoculation the participants may have encountered. The ad will last 45 seconds on t.v. and on radio. The magazine ad will consist of a couple short paragraphs--an equivalent of 45 seconds in the other two contexts. The comparative messages will be essentially the same with the same type of appeals, etc.

After exposure to all three ads, the subjects will be given a questionnaire by research assistants blind to the experiment (to account for any experimenter effects). The questionnaire will ask a variety of topics (10-15 questions) on a semantic differential scale such as the importance of breakfast, how many times a week breakfast cereal is eaten, how often the participant goes grocery shopping, the attractiveness of the source, source credibility, the ad's accuracy, fairness in comparisons, demographics, etc. Finally, three dichotomous questions will be asked of which brand the participant would buy in each case--the brand being advertised or the compared one. The answers will be totaled from all schools to see which medium produces the most success of persuasibility.

The manipulated, or independent, variables are the three different contexts where the ad is viewed/read. The variables that are held constant are similar source attractiveness, same length of ad time, previous inoculation, and same object (cereal) but different brands to account for learning and boredom. The dependent variable is the result--the most persuading medium.

Predictions: If the questionnaire method is carried out in the specified manner, the results should be fairly representative because the variable of context is manipulated while other factors are kept at a constant level. The questionnaire is kept fairly short to avoid the mediacy effect.

Previous research on advertising has addressed many variables of the ad but not the variable of context. Other things held constant, the stated hypothesis should be true. Television contains the animated, "live" human, and people may relate to her and become more involved than a picture in a magazine or a voice on radio. T.v. contains *both* elements of picture and voice.

This research is useful because it has very important implications for the advertising industry. For example, which medium is most effective for an ad, especially for urgent messages such as war? There are many more magazines and radio stations to target as opposed to standard television channels. Where should more money and efforts be spent, and what should be the allocation of ads across the different contexts?

Even though this research should prove to be helpful, it is heuristic in that there are factors which can be further studied to increase knowledge of advertising. The sample size in this research did not have to be very large because participants would view all three contexts. However, to increase validity and reliability, this experiment could be done again with more people.

It would be interesting to find out what the results would be with ads containing people of different ethnicity. Also, would the results be the same with different levels of attractiveness, credibility, or messages across contexts? Does it make a significant difference if the participants primarily used one form of media over another in their lifestyles? Due to cost and time considerations and difficulty in isolating studied variables, this type of research may get complicated. However, an important question arises: Is the nature of the medium or the nature of the ad or an interaction of these two responsible for persuading the consumer?

By studying different variables and aspects of persuasion in advertising, the advertising industry, as well as the vast array of companies and businesses, can extend knowledge, efficiency, and productivity. The proposed research and implications for further research will help add to this "bank" of knowledge.

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The following forms are used to critique student papers. They are discussed in class and used by students in evaluating their own papers and those of others.

The categories are not presumed to be of equal weight which is why there are no numerical evaluations per category. Comments are generally not substantial for areas judged "good" but are always offered for "ok" or "problem" evluations.

Students must have papers available on the due date. On that date we have an in-class workshop where students read each other's papers and offer comments. All students then have the option of turning in a sheet which records the names of their critique group as a "coupon" which entitles them to revise and turn in their papers at the following class period. This has been very successful at eliciting revised (and thus better) papers.

SCTA 201 - Tkachuk
Abstract Paper Grading Form
Fall- 1994

_____
NAME

problem--ok--good 1. Bibliographic Form

problem--ok--good 2. Purpose/Research question/Methodology

problem--ok--good 3. Key Terms/Results explanation

problem--ok--good 4. Discussion

problem--ok--good 5. Clarity of Writing (in own words)

GRADE:_____

SCTA 201 - Tkachuk
Synthesis Paper Grading Form
Fall- 1994

_____
NAME

problem--ok--good 1. Reporting of results

problem--ok--good 2. Organization

problem--ok--good 3. Integration of results

problem--ok--good 4. Clarity of Writing (in own words)

problem--ok--good 5. Bibliographic form

GRADE:_____

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SCTA 201 - Tkachuk
Research Proposal Grading Form
Fall- 1994

_____
NAME

problem--ok--good 1. Review of Literature

problem--ok--good 2. Research Question

problem--ok--good 3. Hypothesis

problem--ok--good 4. Methods explanation

problem--ok--good 5. Predictions

problem--ok--good 6. Works cited form

GRADE:_____